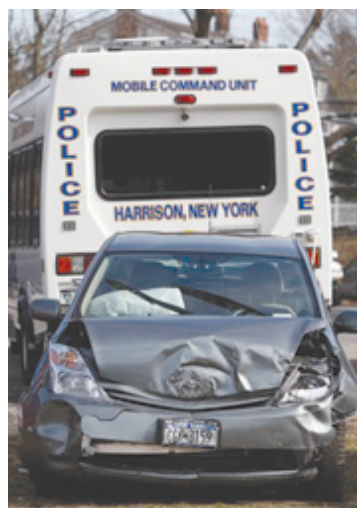


Congress passes Obama's health plan

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

DRIVER ERROR



In this March 10, 2010 file photo, a 2005 Toyota Prius that crashed into a stone wall in suburban New York after its driver claims the hybrid sped up on its own is shown in Harrison, N.Y.

Read more on Page A5

SPORTS NEWS

HEAD SHOTS



This March 14, 2010, file photo shows Washington Capitals' Alex Ovechkin, top, of Russia, looking at Chicago Blackhawks' Brian Campbell after he checked him during the first period of an NHL hockey game in Chicago.

Read more on Page A12

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama has scored the biggest victory of his presidency as Congress approved his signature health care reform bill, bringing near-universal coverage to a wealthy country in which tens of millions of people are uninsured.

The measure passed by the House of Representatives Sunday night represents the biggest expansion of the U.S. federal government's social safety net since Medicare and Medicaid were enacted in the 1960s during President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration to provide government-funded health care coverage to the elderly and poor.

Although the bill does not provide universal health care, it should expand coverage to about 95 percent of eligible Americans, compared with 83 percent today.

Continued on Page 4

Bush, Clinton visit devastated Haitian capital

JONATHAN M. KATZ
MIKE MELIA

Associated Press Writers

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Former Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton toured Haiti's rubble-filled capital Monday to raise aid and investment for a country still reeling from a devastating Jan. 12 earthquake.

It is the first joint visit to the impoverished Caribbean nation for the two former leaders, who were tasked by President Barack Obama with leading the U.S. fundraising effort.

Continued on Page 9



Activists, legislators and community leaders gather outside Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Mich., Monday, March 22, 2010. They launched a petition drive Monday to put a measure on the Michigan ballot asking voters whether they want to exempt the state from the federal health care overhaul.

Associated Press



Haiti's President Rene Preval, second from left, former President George W. Bush, second from right, and former President and U.N. special envoy for Haiti Bill Clinton, left, arrive at the earthquake damaged Presidential Palace in Port-au-Prince, Monday, March 22, 2010.

Associated Press

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Court to weigh citizenship rule that varies by sex



A child is held above the crowd as people march by the Capitol during a rally for immigration reform in Washington, on Sunday, March 21, 2010.

Associated Press

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — One of Ruben Flores-Villar's parents is an American. Unfortunately for him, it is his father and not his mother, a fact that has complicated Flores-Villar's attempts to acquire U.S. citizenship and avoid criminal charges for being in the

United States illegally.

Now, the Supreme Court is entering a curious corner of U.S. immigration law that applies only to children born outside the U.S. to one parent who is an American and one who is not. The law makes it easier for children whose mother is a citizen to become citizens themselves. Even after

reform legislation in 1986, children of American fathers face higher hurdles claiming citizenship for themselves.

The justices agreed Monday to hear Flores-Villar's appeal of his criminal conviction and consider whether a provision of immigration law unfairly discriminates on the basis of gender. The case will be argued in the fall.

Flores-Villar, 35, was born in Tijuana, Mexico, but grew up in the San Diego area, in the care of his father and grandmother.

When he sought U.S. citizenship in 2006 — to stave off criminal charges of being in the country illegally — U.S. immigration authorities turned him down.

For people born before 1986, their U.S. citizen fathers had to have lived in the U.S. for 10 years, at least five of them after the age of 14. Flores-Villar's father could not meet the second part of that requirement because he was only 16 when his son was born.

American mothers need only have lived in the U.S. continuously for a year before the birth of a child.

Changes to immigration law made in 1986 reduced the total residency time for fathers to five years, only two of

which had to be after the age of 14.

By contrast, a child born in the United States, regardless of the parents' nationality, is a U.S. citizen, as is a child born abroad to two American citizens.

Lower federal courts upheld Flores-Villar's conviction and rejected his discrimination claims.

Flores-Villar has previously been deported at least five times since he was convicted of importing marijuana when he was 22, the government said in court papers.

The Obama administration argued that the less stringent residency requirement in the 1986 law was one of several reasons for the court to stay out of the case.

The new requirement "substantially eliminates the risk" that young fathers like Flores-Villar's will be unable to confer citizenship on their children, the government said.

The court ruled on a related issue in 2001, holding that it was all right to require American fathers, but not mothers, of children born out of wedlock and abroad to get a court order of establishing paternity or swear to it under oath. □



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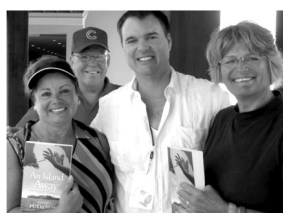
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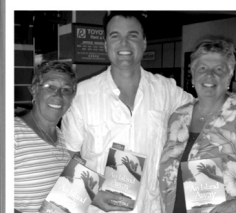
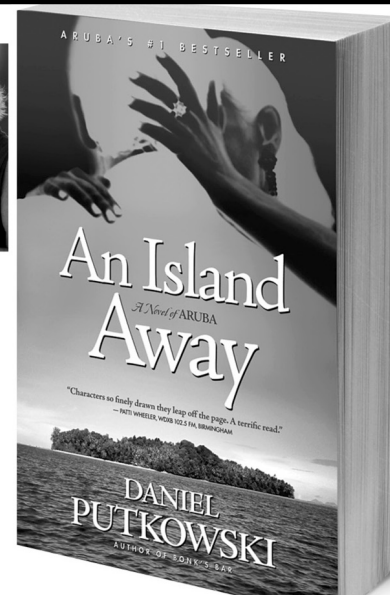
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ACORN disbanding because of money woes, scandal

MICHAEL TARM

Associated Press Writer

CHICAGO (AP)—The once mighty community activist group ACORN announced Monday it is closing amid falling revenues — six months after video footage emerged showing some of its workers giving tax tips to conservative activists posing as a pimp and prostitute.

"It's really declining revenue in the face of a series of attacks from partisan operatives and right-wing activists that have taken away our ability to raise the resources we need," ACORN spokesman Kevin Whelan said.

Several of its largest affiliates, including ACORN New York and ACORN California, broke away this year and changed their names in a bid to ditch the tarnished image of their parent organization and restore revenue that ran dry in the wake of the video scandal.

They will continue to operate under their new names and aren't affected by ACORN's decision to shut down.

ACORN's financial situation and reputation went into free fall within days of the videos' release in September. Congress reacted by yanking ACORN's federal funding, private donors held back cash and scores of ACORN offices closed.

Earlier this month, a U.S. judge reiterated an earlier ruling that the federal law

blacklisting ACORN and groups allied with it was unconstitutional because it singled them out. But that didn't mean any money would be automatically be restored.

Bertha Lewis, the chief executive of ACORN, which stands for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, alluded to financial hardships in a weekend statement as the group's board prepared to deliberate by phone.

"ACORN has faced a series of well-orchestrated, relentless, well-funded right wing attacks that are unprecedented since the McCarthyera," she said. "The videos were a manufactured, sensational story that led to rush to judgment and an unconstitutional act by Congress."

ACORN's board decided to close remaining state affiliates and field offices by April 1 because of falling revenues, with some national operations will continue operating for at least several weeks before shutting for good, Whelan said Monday. For years, ACORN could draw on 400,000 members to lobby for liberal causes, such as raising the minimum wage or adopting universal health care.

ACORN was arguably most successful at registering hundreds of thousands of low-income voters, though that mission was dogged by fraud allegations, including that some workers submitted

ACORN Baltimore Prostitution Investigation Part I



This file image made Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2009 from undated hidden-camera video taken from the web site Biggovernment.com, shows ACORN employee Tonja Thompson, right, speaking with Hannah Giles in a hidden-camera video made by James O'Keefe III, and Giles in Baltimore. In the video, Giles and O'Keefe pose as a pimp and prostitute and talk to ACORN employees who give them tax advice. Community activist group ACORN announced Monday March 22, 2010, it is folding amid falling revenues, six months after video footage emerged showing some of its workers giving tax tips to conservative activists posing as a pimp and prostitute.

Associated Press

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. signs the Senate Health Reform Bill, Monday, March 22, 2010, on Capitol Hill in Washington. From left are, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Md., Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., Rep. Louise Slaughter, D-N.Y., Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., and Rep. Sander Levin, D-Mich.

HEALTH REFORM

Continued from Front Page

The stakes could not have been higher for Obama, who has pushed health care as his top priority since taking office in January 2009. The issue was seen as pivotal to other issues on the president's ambitious domestic agenda, including immigration reform and climate change legislation. "I want to thank every member of Congress who stood up tonight with courage and conviction to make health care reform a reality," Obama said. "I know this wasn't an easy vote for a lot of people. But it was the right vote."

The health care issue is likely to shape the November congressional election, when Republicans try to capture control of both chambers. Democrats will campaign on having overhauled a system that

has made both health care and insurance unaffordable for many. Republicans say the bill will ultimately increase taxes and damage the quality of health care and has little public support. Widely viewed as dead two months ago, the Senate-passed bill cleared the House on Sunday night on a 219-212 vote, with Republicans unanimous in opposition.

A second, smaller measure — making changes in the first — cleared the House shortly before midnight and was sent to the Senate, where Democratic leaders said they had the votes necessary to pass it quickly.

Obama is expected to sign the bill Tuesday at the White House, spokesman Robert Gibbs said Monday. A White House South Lawn ceremony is planned. Obama is inviting all lawmakers who supported

the bill and other Americans whose stories represent the need for reformed health care, Gibbs said.

Obama will to Iowa on Thursday as he now turns to seeing the companion bill through the Senate and selling the health care overhaul's benefits on behalf of House lawmakers who cast risky votes.

States are already lining up to sue the federal government over the constitutionality of the health care overhaul legislation. Officials in at least 10 states have agreed to file a lawsuit challenging it on grounds it violates state sovereignty by mandating that all Americans have some form of health insurance.

The president watched the House vote Sunday from the White House with Vice President Joe Biden and about 40 staff aides. When the long sought 216th vote came in — the magic number needed for passage — the room burst into applause and hugs. An exultant president exchanged a high-five with his chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel.

Republican Senator John McCain said Monday morning that Democrats have not heard the last of the health care debate, and said he was repulsed by "all this euphoria going on."

McCain, who was Obama's rival in the 2008 presidential election, told ABC television that "outside the (Washington) Beltway, the American people are very angry. They don't like it, and

we're going to repeal this." While national health care has been a goal of presidents stretching back decades, it has proved elusive, in part because self-reliance and suspicion of a strong central government remain strong in America.

After more than a year of political combat, debate on the House floor fell along predictable lines. Not one Republican voted for the bill. Some moderate Democrats also voted against it.

Most Americans receive private health insurance through their jobs as part of their benefits, but employers are not required to offer coverage. The government covers the elderly and indigent. The health reform measure extends coverage to 32 million of the nearly 50 people in the U.S. who lack it and bans insurers from denying coverage on the basis of pre-existing medical conditions. It would also usher in a significant expansion of Medicaid, the program for the poor.

Parents would be able to keep children on their coverage up to age 26. A new high-risk pool would offer coverage to uninsured people with medical problems until 2014, when the coverage expansion goes into high gear.

Under the legislation, most Americans would be required to purchase insurance, and face penalties if they refused. Once enacted, the measure would create a series of so-called "insurance exchanges"

beginning in 2014 where self-employed people and small businesses could pool together to shop for health care coverage.

Republicans readily agreed the bill would affect everyone in America — it will have an impact on one-sixth of the U.S. economy — but warned repeatedly of that it will result in higher taxes and other financial burdens.

"We have failed to listen to America," said House Republican leader Rep. John Boehner.

As the House met Sunday, a shouting band of protesters outside the Capitol dramatized their opposition, and one man stood up in the House visitor's gallery shouting, "Kill the bill" before he was ushered out — evidence of the passions the yearlong debate over health care has stirred.

Obama's quest to overhaul health care seemed at a dead end two months ago, when Republicans won a special election to fill the late Edward Kennedy's Massachusetts Senate seat, and with it, enough votes to prevent a final vote.

But the White House, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid soon came up with a rescue plan that required the House to approve the Senate-passed measure despite opposition to many of its provisions, then have both chambers pass a fix-it measure incorporating numerous changes. □

NY police agree driver error caused Prius crash

JIM FITZGERALD

Associated Press Writer

HARRISON, New York (AP)

—A housekeeper who reported that her boss' Toyota Prius accelerated on its own and wouldn't brake as she hurtled toward a stone wall apparently had her foot on the gas pedal the entire time, according to a police investigation that concluded the driver, not the car, caused the accident.

The March 9 crash in a suburban New York driveway came the day after a driver in San Diego reported that the gas pedal got stuck on his 2008 Prius, resulting in a wild 94 mph ride on a Southern California freeway.

The two accidents raised new questions about Toyota's accelerators.

The company had already recalled more than 8 million cars over gas pedals that could become stuck or be held down by floor mats.

But in the California case, Toyota said its tests showed the car's gas pedal, backup safety system and electronics were working fine.

And on Monday, Harrison police Capt. Anthony Marraccini said, "The vehicle accelerator in this case was depressed 100 percent at the time of collision, and there was absolutely no indication of any brake application."

The data came from the car's on-board event data recorder and computer and was downloaded during an inspection Wednesday joined by Toyota and the National Highway Safety Traffic Administration, which also concluded the car was not at fault. The event data recorder, or "black box," is designed to record the state of the car at the moment of an impact.

Marraccini said the 56-year-old driver "believes she depressed the brake, but that just simply isn't the case here."

She did not try to deceive police, he said, and she faces no charges.

Toyota spokesman Wade Hoyt said owner of Priuses can feel secure that "if you step on the brake they'll stop, even if the accelerator is glued to the

floor."

The company also issued a statement saying it would continue to investigate "reported incidents of unintended acceleration."

The New York driver, identified as Gloria Rosel, did not come to the door of the house where she works Monday. Calls there were not returned. □

Toyota Prius is parked at the Harrison, New York police station waiting to be tested by Toyota personnel and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Wednesday, March 17, 2010 in Harrison, New York.

Associated Press



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In this photo released by Korean Central News Agency via Korea News Service in Tokyo on Sunday, March 7, 2010, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il claps during a massive rally Saturday, March 6, 2010, marking the completion of the Vinalon Complex, in Hamhung, North Korea.

Associated Press

North Korea to try American for illegal entry

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Monday that it will put an American on trial for entering the communist country illegally.

State-run media identified him as Aijalon Mahli Gomes, 30, of Boston, and said "his crime has been confirmed." The brief dispatch from the Korean Central News Agency did not say when he would stand trial.

A spokeswoman for the man's family in Boston, Thaleia Schlesinger, said that Gomes had been teaching English in South Korea for about two years and that it was unclear why he would have gone to North Korea.

She said his family was going through a difficult time and is "praying for his speedy return home."

North Korea had announced two months ago that an American was detained Jan. 25 for trespassing after crossing into the country from China and was under investigation, but had not identified him at the time.

U.S. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said that the United States wants to make sure the detained American man is returned to the United States as soon as possible.

"We are concerned about his health and welfare. We are obviously concerned about whatever legal process he might face," Crowley said, adding that the U.S. has concerns about North Korea's lack of transparency."

Gomes is the fourth American reported detained in communist North Korea on charges of illegal entry in the past year.

Two American journalists, Laura Ling and

Euna Lee, were arrested a year ago near the Chinese border and sentenced to 12 years of hard labor for illegal entry and engaging in "hostile acts." They were freed in August after former U.S. President Bill Clinton made a high-profile humanitarian visit to Pyongyang to negotiate their release.

On Christmas, American missionary Robert Park strode into North Korea from China on a self-proclaimed mission to draw attention to North Korea's human rights record and to call for leader Kim Jong Il to step down. He was released last month after more than 40 days in custody.

Monday's announcement comes as regional powers are pushing for North Korea, believed to have enough weaponized plutonium to make at least a half-dozen bombs, to rejoin international talks on dismantling its nuclear weapons program. Pyongyang abandoned an aid-for-disarmament pact and pulled out of the negotiations last year to protest criticism of a rocket launch widely decried as a violation of U.N. sanctions.

North Korea's move to test a nuclear bomb weeks later prompted the U.N. Security Council to further tighten sanctions against the impoverished regime.

North Korea has pressed the U.S. for bilateral talks to discuss a peace treaty as part of any disarmament negotiations, citing the U.S. military presence on South Korean soil as a main reason for its drive to build nuclear weapons.

The two Koreas remain in a state of war, divided by a heavily fortified border, because their three-year conflict ended in a truce, not a peace treaty, in 1953. □

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Top Yemeni clerics oppose ban on child brides

AHMED AL-HAJ
HADEEL AL-SHALCHI
Associated Press Writers

SAN'A, Yemen (AP) — Some of Yemen's most influential Islamic leaders, including one the U.S. says mentored Osama bin Laden, have declared supporters of a ban on child brides to be apostates. The religious decree, issued Sunday, deeply imperils efforts to salvage legislation that would make it illegal for those under the age of 17 to marry.

The practice is widespread in Yemen and has been particularly hard to discourage

in part because of the country's gripping poverty — bride-prices in the hundreds of dollars are especially difficult for poor families to pass up. More than a quarter of Yemen's females marry before age 15, according to a report last year by the Social Affairs Ministry. Tribal custom also plays a role, including the belief that a young bride can be shaped into an obedient wife, bear more children and be kept away from temptation.

A February 2009 law set the minimum age for marriage at 17, but it was repealed and sent back to parliament's

constitutional committee for review after some lawmakers called it un-Islamic. The committee is expected to make a final decision on the legislation next month.

Some of the clerics who signed Sunday's decree sit on the committee.

The group behind the declaration also includes Yemen's most influential cleric, Sheik Abdul-Majid al-Zindani, whom the United States has branded a spiritual mentor of bin Laden. Al-Zindani denies being a member of al-Qaida.

In a further challenge to the



Yemeni women hold up the Quran and Arabic placard reading "yes to the legal rights of the Muslim woman" as they take part in a protest outside the parliament in San'a, Sunday, March 21, 2010.

Associated Press

Grisly find in Mexico: Dismembered police officers

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The pre-dawn discovery of two bodies cut into pieces and shoved into two black bags brought a tragic end Monday to a search for two missing police officers in the southern state of Guerrero.

Law enforcement officials say the bagged body parts were found at 3:15 a.m. (5:15 a.m. EDT; 0915 GMT) outside police headquarters in Guerrero's capital city, Chilpancingo.

One of the victims was a regional commander, the other a state police officer. Notes written on yellow cards were attached to the bags, but police refused to disclose what they said. Drug cartel killers frequently attach messages to bodies.

Police officers have been targets, and are sometimes complicit, in drug-related killings, which have claimed 17,900 lives since President Felipe Calderon stepped up the drug war in December 2006. On Sunday, Rodrigo Medina, governor of the northern state of Nuevo Leon, announced that he was firing 81 state police officers suspected of corruption.

Also in Nuevo Leon on Sunday, the police chief of the city of Santa Catarina narrowly avoided being killed by gunmen believed to be



A suspect is taken away by Mexican navy marines at a crime scene in Santa Catarina near Monterrey, Mexico, Sunday, March 21, 2010. According to local media reports, a person was killed when unidentified gunmen tried to kill Santa Catarina Police Chief Rene Castillo Sanchez who was injured.

Associated Press

connected to drug traffickers. The assailants attacked a convoy of vehicles carrying Police Chief Rene Castillo Sanchez and other authorities shortly after the authorities had arrested several drug dealers. One of Sanchez's bodyguards was killed and three people in the convoy were wounded, said a police spokeswoman who, under department rules, was not authorized to give her name.

The Mexican military set up a makeshift checkpoint between the resort city of Acapulco in Guerrero state and the Acapulco airport Sunday evening after a man was killed in a shootout between gunmen riding in separate vehicles. □

rights groups pushing for a ban, government officials are reluctant to challenge al-Zindani and other conservative tribal and religious figures whose support they need to hold onto power in the fragile nation.

The religious leaders organized a protest against the legislation on Sunday by a group of women. Hidden behind black face veils and robes, the women carried signs that read "Yes to the Islamic rights of women."

"I was married at 15 and have many children now," said one of the women, Umm Abdul-Rahman. "And I will marry my daughter at the same age if I decide she is ready for it."

The issue of Yemen's child brides vaulted into the headlines three years ago when an 8-year-old girl boldly went by herself to a courtroom and

demanding a judge dissolve her marriage to a man in his 30s. She eventually won a divorce, and legislators began looking at ways to curb the practice. In September, a 12-year-old Yemeni child-bride died after struggling for three days in labor to give birth, a local human rights organization said.

A rights group pushing for a ban planned a protest for Tuesday.

"The government has two options: to give girls in Yemen a chance at life or to condemn them to a death sentence," said Amal Basha, chairwoman of the group, Sisters Arab Forum in Yemen.

Yemen once set 15 as the minimum age for marriage, but parliament annulled that law in the 1990s, saying parents should decide when a daughter marries. □

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China's sandstorms blast Beijing with dust, sand

CHRISTOPHER BODEEN

Associated Press Writer

BEIJING (AP) — The dust works its way through keyholes and window frames, and smells like a filthy brew of dirt, smoke and metallic particles. The sky turns magenta and whole buildings disappear. Eyes tear up and throats get sore from coughing.

Northern China's spring sandstorms blew in with particular ferocity over the weekend, bringing misery to people working outdoors Monday in Beijing and across a wide swath of the country.

"It gets in your throat, under your clothes, in your bed," said Beijing street sweeper Xue Yuan. "I hate it, but there's really nothing you can do."

The storms are a product of worsening desertification in Inner Mongolia and other Gobi Desert regions hundreds of miles (kilometers) to the north and west of Beijing caused by overgrazing, deforestation, drought and urban sprawl. Strong winds pick up the loose dust and dirt, mixing them with industrial pollution.

Beijing's air quality index was set at Level 4, one grade better than the most serious Level 5 that was reached Saturday as the mixture of sand, dust and pollution blasted the capital. City meteorologists said conditions would improve, but warned the sand would linger through midweek.

Record pollution levels



A sandstorm reduce visibility at a busy thoroughfare in Beijing, China, Monday, March 22, 2010. China's expanding deserts now cover one-third of the country because of overgrazing, deforestation, urban sprawl and drought. The shifting sands have led to a sharp increase in sandstorms - the grit from which can travel as far as the western United States.

were registered in Hong Kong, 1,240 miles (2,000 kilometers) to the south, partly because of the storms. Schools were advised to cancel outdoor activities and at least 20 elderly people sought medical assistance for shortness of breath, Hong Kong's radio RTHK reported.

Across the 100 mile-(160-kilometer)-wide Taiwan Strait, island residents covered their mouths to avoid breathing in the grit that can cause chest discomfort and respiratory problems even in healthy people. Sand covered cars in just 10 minutes and some flights were canceled because of poor visibility caused by the sandstorm.

Beijing residents hunkered indoors as the fine dust

worked its way into homes and offices, cutting visibility to about 3,000 feet.

Outside, people scurried along sand-strewn sidewalks, covering their faces with gauzy handkerchiefs or donning surgical masks. There were no immediate reports of illnesses connected to the dust.

In a warning posted Monday on its Web site, China's Central Meteorological Station urged Beijing's 22 million people to close doors and windows and safeguard sensitive electronic and mechanical equipment.

China Central Television told viewers to clean out their noses with salt water and remove grit from ears with cotton swabs dipped in alcohol.

Associated Press

In the past decade, Beijing has sought to counter the effects of desertification by planting grass and billions of trees to hold back the desert, mostly to no avail. Along with bringing pollution, the storms underscore a looming water crisis in the north that the government is seeking to head off with a massive project to pump water from the south.

Li Dongping, a tourist visiting Tiananmen Square from southern China, said more needs to be done to boost environmental protection and public awareness.

"We need to improve our environment, we should plant more trees and improve the soil infrastructure, and also we should raise our sense of environmental

protection," Li said.

The latest sandstorm was expected to sweep into South Korea on Tuesday, said Kim Seung-bum of the Korea Meteorological Administration.

The sandstorm that raked across China over the weekend caused the worst "yellow dust" haze in South Korea since 2005, and authorities issued a rare nationwide dust advisory.

Grit from Chinese sandstorms has been found to travel as far as the western United States.

State television's noon newscast showed the tourist city of Hangzhou on the east coast of China, where graceful bridges and waterside pagodas were hidden in a mix of sand and haze.

The U.S. Embassy in Beijing warned that particulate matter in the air made conditions "hazardous," although high winds dispersed some of the pollution and the air quality was later upgraded to "very unhealthy."

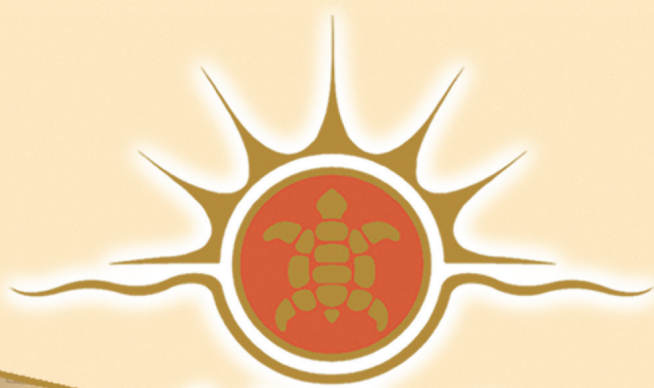
Duan Li, a spokeswoman for the Beijing Meteorological Station, said conditions in the city seemed more severe because a sandstorm Saturday deposited grit on rooftops, sidewalks and trees. The winds Monday carried in even more sand and stirred up what was already there.

The last massive sandstorm to hit Beijing was in 2006, when winds dumped about 300,000 tons of sand on the capital. □



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HAITIAN CAPITAL

Continued from Front Page

After meeting with President Rene Preval on the grounds of the collapsed national palace, they walked through the tarps-and-tent city on the adjacent Champ de Mars, the national mall filled with 60,000 homeless quake survivors living in squalor.

Both men, surrounded by Secret Service agents, Haitian police and U.N. peacekeepers, waded into the giant encampment to shake hands with earthquake survivors.

Clinton said they hoped to get all the aid agencies working together to make the most of the huge global outpouring of support.

“We have to get the whole universe of people who want to help Haiti operating on the same page,” he said. Bush told reporters their purpose was to see the devastation first hand and “remind the American people there is still suffering and work to be done here.” He said they also wanted to encourage entrepreneurship in Haiti to create jobs and grow the economy.

“Hopefully, our visit will remind people that Haiti needs help,” Bush said. Lucharles Jean-Laudius, one of hundreds of thousands of people left homeless by the earthquake, welcomed the visit as a sign that the U.S. would continue to supply aid. He feared the recent withdrawal of American troops was a sign the world was losing interest in their plight.

“But if the presidents are coming it’s because they want to help, that’s a good thing,” said the 34-year-old Jean-Laudius, who lives under a plastic tarp with his wife and two children near the

national palace.

While the government and business leaders hail their appearance as a signal of America’s commitment, the visit by two ex-presidents who have played major roles in Haiti’s recent political trajectory is also reminding the country of its tumultuous past.

Supporters of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide staged a protest outside the national palace, with about 100 participants, burning tires and demanding the return of their exiled leader. Clinton and Bush visit as the country struggles to feed and shelter victims of the magnitude-7 quake, which killed an estimated 230,000 people. Another 1.3 million quake survivors are homeless, with many living in camps prone to dangerous flooding in the April rainy season.

The visit aims to spotlight the dramatic need ahead of a critical March 31 U.N. donors conference in New York, where Haitian officials will ask for \$11.5 billion in reconstruction help.

Aid was already being announced on Monday.

The Inter-American Development Bank announced it had agreed to forgive its \$479 million share of Haiti’s \$1.2 billion in foreign debt while offering \$2 billion in new financing. And the European Union said it will donate €1 billion (\$1.36 billion) in development aid to Haiti in the years ahead.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has also announced he would cancel Haiti’s debt to his country, which the IMF had listed at more than \$200 million.

Monday is Bush’s first trip to Haiti. Clinton, who is the U.N. special envoy



Haiti’s President Rene Preval, left, former President George W. Bush, center, and former President and U.N. special envoy for Haiti Bill Clinton greet people at a makeshift camp for homeless earthquake survivors located next to the Presidential Palace in Port-au-Prince, Monday, March. 22, 2010. Former U.S. presidents Clinton and Bush are visiting Haiti to assess recovery needs. They were tapped by President Barack Obama to spearhead U.S. fundraising in response to the devastating Jan. 12 earthquake.

to the country, has made two visits since the quake and five in the past two years. He also visited as president.

The two former presidents have arguably shaped Haiti’s history as much as anyone alive today.

Clinton presided over a refugee crisis born of the 1991 ouster of Aristide, Haiti’s first democratically elected president. He returned Aristide to power in 1994 with a force of 20,000 U.S. troops. Bush is remembered by many Haitians — especially the thousands in Port-au-Prince’s teeming slums — as the U.S. leader whose administration chartered the plane that flew Aristide back into exile during a

2004 rebellion. Pro-Aristide protesters outside the national palace Monday chanted, “Down with Bush.”

The nonprofit Clinton Bush Haiti Fund has raised \$37 million from 220,000 individuals including Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio, who gave \$1 million, and Obama, who among other donations gave \$200,000 of his Nobel Peace Prize.

About \$4 million has gone to such organizations as Habitat for Humanity, the University of Miami/Project Medishare mobile hospital in Port-au-Prince and the U.S. branch of the Irish charity Concern Worldwide. The rest has yet to be allocated. □

Associated Press

Ben Affleck launches aid group for eastern Congo



In this photo taken Thursday, March 18, 2010 Ben Affleck, right, founder of the Eastern Congo Initiative, sits beside an official of the Eastern Congo Initiative, left, as they listens to a survivor of sexual violence talk, partially seen foreground left, at Aid Group HEAL Africa's premises in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo. Affleck launched a new initiative Monday to raise money and awareness over atrocities committed against women and children during years of conflict in eastern Congo, Affleck told The Associated Press.

(AP Photo/Barbara Kinney)

By JASON STRAZIUSO, Associated Press Writer
NAIROBI, Kenya — Ben Affleck launched a new initiative Monday to raise money and awareness over atrocities committed against women and children during years of conflict in eastern Congo, Affleck told The Associated Press.

The American actor and director spent five days in the country last week, where he met with former child sex slaves and prisoners convicted of rape in the hope of gaining a better understanding of Congo's troubles.

The new foundation — the Eastern Congo Initiative — will support community-based, Congolese groups, said Affleck on the heels of his fifth trip to the country.

"It was folks in these communities that were addressing the humanitarian crisis who were doing the most, in my view, to solve it, because they understood the community, because they understood the problem, they were the most dedicated and the most committed because it was their lives," Affleck told AP over the weekend at Nairobi's international airport.

"Naturally they were best equipped to solve it. Their impediment was they didn't have the means, the funding," he said.

The new initiative is funded in part by founding member Howard G. Buffett, son of investor Warren Buffet, to whom Affleck pitched his vision of a new aid group by describing eastern Congo's dire situation.

"I want you to know that 3.5 million people have died over the last 12 years. I want you to know about the women who are being raped, about the child soldiers ... about the kids I just met who have HIV," Affleck said he told Buffet. "I kind of bored him for two hours and basically twisted his arm."

Buffet said in a statement that he joined Affleck in the initiative because he believes in supporting locally initiated, sustainable efforts.

The 37-year-old Affleck has been traveling to eastern Congo since 2007 and previously directed a short film called "Gimme Shelter" about the humanitarian crisis there. The country has suffered years of violence and its devastating 1998-2002 war split the vast nation into rival fiefdoms and involved half a dozen African armies.

Affleck said he was insecure about getting involved at first, because of how little he initially knew and for fear of being seen as an arrogant actor. That's why he took five trips into the region before launching his project, he said.

The Eastern Congo Initiative

will also push the U.S. government to develop a comprehensive strategy and show more leadership in the region, he said.

Faida Mitifu, the U.S. ambassador to Congo, said Affleck's initiative would bring "much-needed attention to a region that has suffered for too long."

One person Affleck met with last week was a 19-year-old woman who was abducted at age 15 by a group of rebels from neighboring Rwanda and was forced to serve as a sex slave to six men for about two years.

She eventually ran away with only the clothes on her back and was taken in by an aid group called Laissez L'Afrique Vivre — or Let Africa Live — that teaches former child soldiers skills like carpentry and sewing.

"A former slave and bush wife to six guys, finds out she's pregnant and she wanted to die, didn't think life was worth living, and a nun from the organization came and found her and brought her in," Affleck said. "She's now going to law school to try to become a lawyer and she said she wants to do women's rights."

It's exactly the kind of aid group that Affleck said his new initiative will support. "I thought these people were pretty great," he said. □

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Filmmaker Del Toro to give 'Hobbit' new look

By MIN LEE, AP Entertainment Writer

HONG KONG — One of Peter Jackson's frequent collaborators says the "Lord of the Rings" director passed the torch to Mexican filmmaker Guillermo del Toro to give the trilogy's two-part prequel, "The Hobbit," a fresh look.

After the huge success of the "Rings" series, Jackson is now working on adapting the J.R.R. Tolkien fantasy novel that takes place before the trilogy. But this time the Oscar-winning New Zealand filmmaker is producing and working on the script, relinquishing directing duties to Del Toro, whose credits include "Pan's Labyrinth" and the two "Hellboy" movies.

Longtime Jackson collaborator, art designer Richard Taylor, says he thinks his friend gave up the director's chair "probably because he's spent so long in Middle Earth ... and probably felt a director such as Guillermo could bring something passionate and unique and original and new to the content for the sake of the fans,"

referring to the imaginary world where the novels are set.

"It's an absolute delight to be working with Guillermo Del Toro. We've all enjoyed his craft as seen in 'Pan's Labyrinth' and the 'Hellboy' movies.

His unique aesthetic and storytelling style brings a lovely aesthetic to the world and one we're enjoying being part of," Taylor told The Associated Press on Monday in Hong Kong, where he is attending a digital entertainment conference at the technology park Cyberport.

The Weta Workshop president said his team has started designing the landscape and characters in "The Hobbit," but that he was unclear when shooting on the New Line Cinema production will start in New Zealand.

"We're just patiently waiting for it to begin. It's been in early development for a while. I'm sure it will get going some time soon," Taylor said. He said he will stick to a consistent look for the main characters that appear in both the "Rings" series and "The Hobbit." □



Health care companies pull stock market higher

By STEPHEN BERNARD
and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK – Health stocks lifted the market Monday following House approval of an overhaul bill that would extend insurance to millions. The Dow Jones industrial average rose about 60 points in late afternoon trading. Broader indexes also climbed. Investors had expected the health care bill would pass the House, but the approval late Sunday removed uncertainty about the rules that would govern the industry. A

companion bill now goes back to the Senate. The changes could have far-reaching effects on health companies.

Hospital operators Tenet Healthcare Corp. and Health Management Associates Inc. each rose more than 8 percent. Stocks opened lower following more doubts about Greece's ability to repay its debt. Concern about the country's fiscal crunch pushed investors into the safety of the dollar in morning trading. Stocks extended their gains after demand for the dollar eased. Traders focused on

health stocks because the bill passed by the House will extend benefits to 32 million uninsured Americans. That means increased business for insurers and drug makers. Many of the key points of the bill will not go into effect for several years.

"You've got some uncertainty here lifted," said Jack Ablin, chief investment officer at Harris Private Bank in Chicago. Ablin noted, however, that other industries will face higher costs to pay for wider coverage. "What it really comes down to is that as

Geithner says bank overhaul must protect consumers

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON – Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner says the administration will not accept a financial overhaul bill that does not provide strong consumer protection and restraints on risk taking by large banks. Geithner urged lawmakers to listen to the families and businesses that were harmed by the financial crisis and not the financial institutions that brought on the crisis, the most severe to hit the country since the 1930s.

"The test we face is whether we can enact real reforms that provide strong protection for consumers, strong constraints on risk taking by large institutions and strong tools to protect the economy and taxpayers from future crises," Geithner said in remarks prepared for delivery to the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank.

"We will not accept a bill that does not meet that test," Geithner said. His comments came as the Senate Banking Committee was preparing to take up legislation sponsored

by Sen. Christopher Dodd, the chairman of the committee.

In his remarks, Geithner said that the country was facing a "defining moment" in the battle to enact financial reform.

The administration put forward a set of recommendation nine months ago and the House passed a bill in December. But progress has been slower in the Senate with Dodd so far unable to win Republican support for an overhaul bill. Geithner said that America's leadership on global financial matters was at stake in the congressional debate.

"If we fail to act, America will lose this opportunity to set the global agenda, to define new high standards for all financial companies and to lead the debate in shaping a level playing field on terms that play to our strengths," Geithner said.

"If we fail to act, American firms that operate globally will face a more balkanized system, with higher costs of doing business and riddled with pockets of lower standards designed to attract the kinds of risky behavior we



FILE - In this March 16, 2010 file photo, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington. Geithner said Monday, March 22, 2010, the administration will not accept a financial overhaul bill that does not provide strong consumer protection and restraints on risk taking by large banks.

(AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari, file)

are seeking to end," he said. Geithner urged lawmakers to "be careful whose voice you listen to" in deciding what provisions to support. He said lawmakers needed to "listen less to those whose judgments brought us this crisis" and who were complaining about having to live with increased regulations and increased fees to pay for the costs of the crisis. □



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, March 22, 2010.

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid

a result of this bill health care is a beneficiary at the expense of every other sector."

Stocks have been rising steadily in recent weeks as investors grow more confident in a rebound following a string of improved economic reports. At the same time, much of the advance has come on light trading volume. That signals that not all of the gains are tied to increasing expectations about the economy. Some analysts say that stocks are rising in a vacuum rather than because investors have strong beliefs that the market is poised to go higher.

In the final hour of trading, the Dow rose 60.77, or 0.6 percent, to 10,802.75. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 7.21, or 0.6 percent, to 1,167.11, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 24.11,

or 1 percent, to 2,398.52.

Bond prices rose, pushing down yields. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note fell to 3.67 percent from 3.70 percent late Friday.

The dollar was mixed against other major currencies. Gold fell. Crude oil rose 57 cents to \$81.25 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Major stock indexes fell Friday because of renewed concerns about Greece. The Dow fell 0.3 percent, while the S&P 500 index dropped 0.5 percent. The latest concern about Greece is that the country might not get the outside financial support it has been seeking. The country's debt woes have dragged down the market off and on for nearly two months as the country tries to cut its budget and is looking for outside support. □

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Players may want to tweak proposed rule change



Toronto Maple Leafs' Fredrik Sjostrom, right, takes a high stick in the head from Montreal Canadiens' Maxim Lapierre during the first period of an NHL hockey game in Toronto on Saturday, March 20, 2010.

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — NHL players are looking to tweak the proposed rule on blindsided hits to the head in an effort to get it in place this season.

Competition committee member Jason Spezza said in Montreal on Monday that the NHL Players' Association is looking to make a counterproposal to the rule drafted by general managers earlier this month. However, the players aren't seeking any major changes.

"It's very similar," Spezza said. "We're looking for a Band-Aid fix for the rest of the year in case something

happens, but in the long term, we have to sit down together and find a better solution than just tweaking a little rule. It has to be something that's talked about. It can't just be sprung on.

"It's too bad because we've been talking for two years to try to get something in place, but it's hard to find the proper language and the right rule."

The NHLPA first expressed a desire to see a head-checking penalty in March 2009.

After meeting earlier this month in Florida, the league's 30 GMs proposed one that would give referees the ability to call a minor or major for any blindside hit where the primary point of contact is the head. It was intended to be implemented next season, but a series of recent incidents has prompted the league to look at fast-tracking the process.

The NHLPA received a DVD detailing the new rule on Friday night and held a conference call that evening with the five members who sit on the competition committee — Spezza, Ryan Miller, Mathieu Schneider, Jeff Halpern and Brian Campbell.

Even though the group appears to have come up with a counterproposal for the league, a union spokesperson said Monday that one hasn't officially been made. It's expected to come as soon as Tuesday.

"We've talked about some things and we have to bounce it back off the league now," Spezza said. "We've come to a decision that we want to do something, but the league has to agree to what we want to do." With less than three weeks left in the regular season, the players want to take a cautious approach.

"We've been trying as players for two years to get something in and the league has said there are rules already in place to protect against head shots, and now they want to make a change," Spezza said. "But we have to be careful. There are about 10 games left in the season and you don't want to make a change and put the refs in a bad position."

Any changes made to the rulebook require the approval of both the competition committee and NHL board of governors. □



Svetlana Kuznetsova, of Russia, talks with the media during a news conference for the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, Calif., Wednesday, March 10, 2010.

Associated Press

STEVEN WINE
AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAVNE, Florida (AP) — Roger Federer and Svetlana Kuznetsova are the top seeds for the Sony Ericsson Open. The 13-day tournament begins Tuesday with unseeded women in action. Seeded players have a first-round bye, and Federer plays his opening match Saturday night.

The draw was held Monday, and No. 2-seeded Novak Djokovic and No. 4 Rafael Nadal landed in the half

Federer, Kuznetsova top-seeded for Sony

opposite Federer.

Five-time champion Serena Williams will miss the tournament with a left knee injury. Caroline Wozniacki is seeded second.

Defending champion Victoria Azarenka could

meet reigning U.S. Open champion Kim Clijsters in the fourth round. Justine Henin, making a comeback this year, received a wild card and could face No. 5-seeded Elena Dementieva in the second round. □

Armstrong's team left out of Giro

MILAN (AP) — Lance Armstrong's RadioShack was left off the list of 22 squads invited to the Giro d'Italia on Monday.

Armstrong had already announced that he would not compete in the May 8-30 race, but there was still a possibility his team could enter with other riders.

RadioShack apparently never intended to the race the Giro, though, according to what Armstrong wrote on his Twitter account Monday: "Interesting 2 read that @teamradioshack not selected 4 the Giro. Unrelated - guess they got our letter Jan 23 saying we wouldn't be coming."

Armstrong ended up on bad terms with

Giro organizers after helping arrange a rider protest during the Milan stage of last year's race, in which the seven-time Tour de France winner finished 12th.

Instead, Armstrong is slated to ride the Tour of California in May.

Organizers said they received requests from 31 teams.

Armstrong's former team, Astana, was invited even though two-time Tour de France winner Alberto Contador — who also won the 2008 Giro — is not expected to ride.

Riccardo Ricco's Ceramica Flaminia team was announced as a reserve squad, which could take the place

of one of the 22 selected teams if organizers deem a switch is necessary before the race starts.

Ricco recently finished his 20-month ban for doping at the 2008 Tour de France and his first race back will be the five-day Coppi & Bartali event in Italy this week.

The BMC squad of world champion Cadel Evans was invited, as was Rabobank, which features defending champion Denis Menchov and Saturday's Milan-San Remo winner, Oscar Freire.

Also included was Sky with British standout Bradley Wiggins, and the Cervelo squad with former Tour de France winner Carlos Sastre. □

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NHL Roundup

Finland's Selanne scores 600th goal in NHL

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Teemu Selanne became the 18th player in NHL history to score 600 goals, scoring 34 seconds into the second period during a power play in the Anaheim Ducks' 5-2 victory over the Colorado Avalanche on Sunday night.

The 39-year-old right wing from Finland, playing his 16th and perhaps his final season in the NHL, scored on his fifth shot of the game while John-Michael Liles was off for hooking Matt Beleskey.

Craig Anderson stopped Lubomir Visnovsky's one-timer from just inside the blue line, then thwarted Corey Perry's rebound attempt. But the Avalanche defense couldn't clear the puck, and Selanne slammed his 21st goal of the season into a wide-open net before Anderson could scramble back to the crease. Beleskey, Jason Blake, Troy Bodie and Ryan Getzlaf also scored, and Jonas Hiller made 26 saves. Darcy Tucker and Ruslan Salei scored for Colorado.

Coyotes 3, Stars 2, SO

At Dallas, Adrian Aucoin scored in the fourth round of the shootout as Phoenix matched the franchise record

with its ninth straight victory. The Winnipeg Jets, who moved to Phoenix in 1996, also won nine in a row from March 8-27, 1985. Closing in on their first playoff berth since 2002, the Coyotes have 97 points to match Chicago for the most in the Western Conference.

Radim Verbata beat Marty Turco on the backhand in the third round, and Aucoin was successful for the fifth time in five shootout attempts this season.

Oilers 5, Sharks 1

At Edmonton, Devan Dubnyk made 27 saves for his second straight win, while Dustin Penner and Shawn Horcoff each had a goal and an assist for the Oilers.

Robert Nilsson, Fernando Pisani and Aaron Johnson also scored for Edmonton.

Ryane Clowe spoiled Dubnyk's shutout bid, scoring with 3:02 left.

Thrashers 3, Flyers 1

At Philadelphia, Ondrej Pavelec made 44 saves, while Ron Hainsey, Todd White and Rich Peverley all scored as Atlanta won to move within a point of eighth-place Boston in the Eastern Conference.

The Thrashers have won four straight since a six-game losing streak dropped them

to ninth in the race for eight playoff spots.

Bruins 2, Rangers 1

At Boston, Miroslav Satan and Dennis Wideman scored and Tuukka Rask made 23 saves to help the Bruins open a lead over nine-place Atlanta.

Michael Del Zotto scored for the Rangers.

Panthers 5, Lightning 2

At Sunrise, Florida, Nathan Horton, David Booth and Cory Stillman scored in the first period as Florida ended a three-game losing streak.

Stephen Weiss and Radek Dvorak added third-period goals, and Scott Clemmensen made 29 saves for the Panthers. Steven Stamkos and Steve Downie scored for Tampa Bay. The Lightning have lost five straight and have won just two of their last 14.

Wild 4, Flames 3

At St. Paul, Chuck Kobasew scored twice and Minnesota won its third straight home game, beating Calgary for the fifth time in six games.

Josh Harding made 29 saves, and Andrew Brunette and Guillaume Latendresse also scored for Minnesota, seven points behind eighth-place Detroit in the Western Conference. Steve Staios, Ian White and Eric Nystrom



Anaheim Ducks right wing Teemu Selanne, of Finland, holds the puck from his 600th NHL hockey goal, after the Ducks defeated the Colorado Avalanche 5-2 in an NHL hockey game in Anaheim, Calif., on Sunday, March 21, 2010. Selanne scored early in the second period, and became the 18th player in league history to reach the milestone.

Associated Press

scored for Calgary, two points behind Detroit.

Sabres 5, Hurricanes 3

At Raleigh, Jochen Hecht scored twice and Ryan Miller made 27 saves as Buffalo won its third straight match.

Sergei Samsonov, Brandon Sutter and Eric Staal scored for Carolina.

Predators 3, Blues 2

At St. Louis, Dustin Boyd scored his second goal of the game 48 seconds after Nashville teammate Patric Hornqvist tied it late in the third period.

Defenseman Carlo Colaiacovo had a goal and assist for the Blues, and David Perron also scored. Colaiacovo's power-play goal in the first period ended Nashville goalie Pekka Rinne's shutout streak.

In other NHL matches it was, Phoenix 3, Dallas 2, SO; Boston 2, N.Y. Rangers 1; Minnesota 4, Calgary 3; Buffalo 5, Carolina 3; Florida 5, Tampa Bay 2; Nashville 3, St. Louis 2; Atlanta 3, Philadelphia 1; Edmonton 5, San Jose 1; and Anaheim 5, Colorado 2. □

Official: French Open needs new or better venue

SAMUEL PETREQUIN

AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — The French tennis federation says the French Open needs to get bigger or move from its historical site if it wants to stay competitive with the three other Grand Slam tournaments.

Gilbert Ysern, the general director of the federation, said Monday the relocation of the tournament was reviewed and that a decision could be taken next year.

Ysern said that four projects were studied, including

one that would see the French Open move next to the Versailles castle.

The clay-court Grand Slam could also stay at Roland Garros but the building of new facilities on the site would be required. Construction work at the site would cost about €200 million while building of a new stadium outside Paris would cost an estimated €600 million.

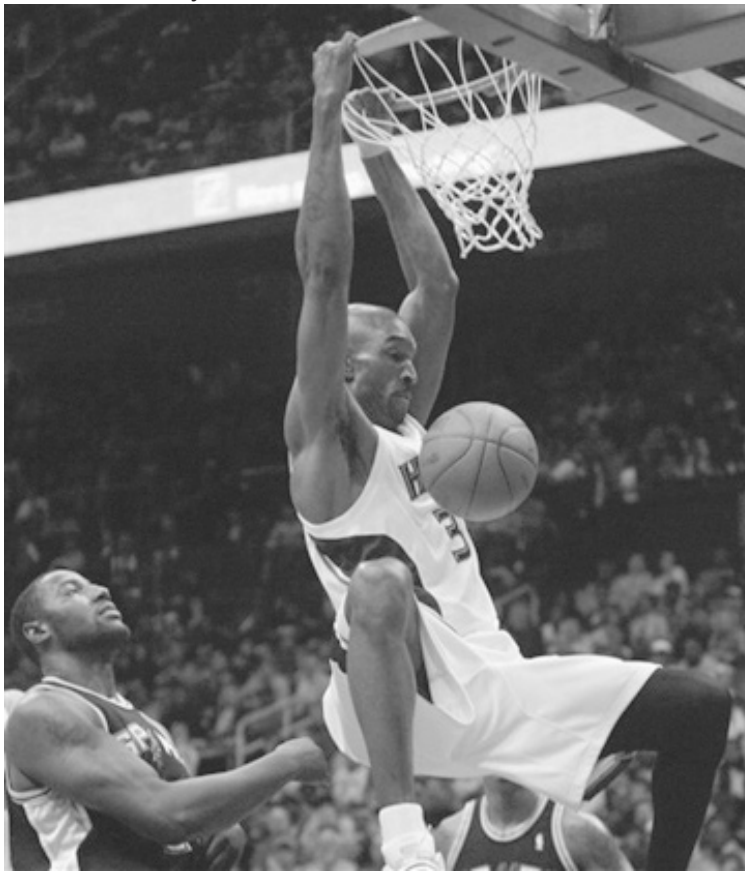
"We live in a very competitive environment. The three other Grand Slam tournament improved a lot during the past 20 years and we are behind them," Ysern

said. "Both in terms of the services we can offer to the players and regarding the stadium facilities."

Ysern said Roland Garros has become too small for its 450,000 annual spectators, and that players also complained of the lack of private spaces dedicated for them.

"I spoke with Roger Federer last year in Monte Carlo and he had a long list of complaints," Ysern said. "And it was not just because he was still looking for his first win at the French at the time."

Continued on Page 15



Atlanta Hawks forward Joe Smith, right, dunks in front of San Antonio Spurs forward DeJuan Blair during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, March 21, 2010, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — J.J. Hickson and Anthony Parker combined for 20 points in the decisive third quarter as Cleveland beat Detroit 104-79 on Sunday to give the Cavaliers their first season sweep of the Pistons in 30 years. Cleveland held a double-digit lead most of the game,

although the Pistons cut it to 55-47 on a basket by Jonas Jerebko with 10 minutes left in the third quarter. Hickson and Parker took charge, combining to score 16 of Cleveland's next 19 points while Detroit went more than five minutes without a field goal. Hickson finished with 13

NBA Roundup

Cavaliers complete rare season sweep of Pistons

points and eight rebounds, Parker had 11 points and LeBron James had 15 points and seven assists while sitting out the fourth quarter. Cleveland has won 10 straight against Detroit, including last season's first-round sweep in the playoffs. Cleveland hadn't swept Detroit during a regular season since going 6-0 against the Pistons during the 1979-80 season.

Jason Maxiell had 16 points for Detroit and Charlie Villanueva had 11 off the bench.

Hawks 119, Spurs 114, OT

At Atlanta, Marvin Williams scored 26 points to lead three scorers with 20 or more as Atlanta beat San Antonio in overtime to clinch a playoff berth.

The Hawks got their first win over the Spurs in five years.

Joe Johnson's jumper with 1:21 remaining in overtime

gave Atlanta a 113-111 lead. After a missed 3-pointer by San Antonio's Matt Bonner, Al Horford hit a jumper as the shot clock expired to push the lead to four points with 35 seconds remaining.

Horford had 22 points and 18 rebounds and Johnson had 20 points with 13 assists as the Hawks ended a seven-game losing streak against the Spurs.

Manu Ginobili matched his season high with 38 points for San Antonio. Tim Duncan added 29 points and 13 rebounds.

Lakers 99, Wizards 92

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 20 of his 24 points during a dynamic second quarter as Los Angeles sent Washington to its 11th straight loss.

Pau Gasol had 28 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers,

who won their sixth straight after a three-game skid. The defending NBA champions had little trouble with woeful Washington in the first three quarters, jumping to a 26-point halftime lead after another memorable quarter by Bryant.

After hitting four 3-pointers and scoring 16 points in the final 5½ minutes before halftime alone, Bryant fell one point shy of matching Alex English for 12th place on the NBA's career scoring list when he scored just two points in the second half.

Suns 93, Trail Blazers 87

At Phoenix, Jared Dudley scored all 10 of his points in the fourth quarter, and Grant Hill hit two key baskets in Phoenix's fourth straight win. The loss ended Portland's five-game winning streak and was only the Trail Blazers' second defeat in nine games. It left them in eighth place in the Western Conference.

In other NBA games it was, Houston 116, New York 112; Indiana 121, Oklahoma City 101; Sacramento 102, L.A. Clippers 89; Cleveland 104, Detroit 79; Atlanta 119, San Antonio 114, OT; L.A. Lakers 99, Washington 92; and Phoenix 93, Portland 87. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

NFL chief favors changes to OT rules in playoffs

By BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

ORLANDO, Fla. — NFL commissioner Roger Goodell likes the proposal to modify overtime in the playoffs. Can his support sway enough owners to approve it for next season? The competition committee recommended Monday to the 32 owners that a team losing the coin toss and then surrendering a field goal on the first possession should have a series of its own in OT. Such a rules change would need 24 votes for ratification.

“This stays true to the integrity of the game,” Goodell said. “The competition committee has come up with something very much worth considering. It keeps the tradition of sudden death, and I think it is responsive to some of the issues that have been brought up. “It’s getting a lot of thought. It’s got potential to be a better system.”

Statistics examined by the committee showed that since 1994, teams winning the coin toss win the game 59.8 percent of the time. The team that loses the toss wins the game 38.5 percent in that 15-year span, or since kickoffs were moved back 5 yards to the 30. Those numbers alarmed Indianapolis Colts president Bill Polian, a member of the committee.

“We felt the stats are so arresting that something needs to be done,” Polian said. “The original framers



This Feb. 5, 2010, file photo shows NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell during a news conference in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. The competition committee recommends that a team surrendering a field goal on the first possession should have a series of its own in OT. Goodell says the idea ‘stays true to the integrity of the game’ and finds it ‘very much worth considering.’ The 32 team owners are expected to vote on the issue this week at their annual league meetings.

of the rule did not project the movement of the kickoff, or (the trend) in improvement of kickers.”

One owner who would seem to have reason to favor the modification, Minnesota’s Zygi Wilf, is not convinced it’s a wise move. The Vikings lost the coin toss for overtime in the NFC title game, then saw the Saints march to a winning field goal on the first — and only — series.

Still, as of Monday, Wilf was leaning toward voting no to a switch.

“We need consistency of the regular season and postseason,” he said.

But, as Polian and other committee members point out, the playoffs already have different overtime rules.

“We play until there is a winner,” Polian said.

During the regular season, a winner must be decided within a 15-minute extra period.

The reason the proposal is only for the playoffs is player safety.

“We are very concerned about injuries occurring, which is the one great reason it has not been proposed before,” Polian added.

Goodell’s positive outlook on the overtime modification can’t hurt its chances of passing, according to competition committee co-chairman Rich McKay.

“It’s important,” McKay said. “He’s the one the owners would listen to. I think he’ll leave it to us as a committee to make sure we make the case on the competitive aspect ...”

A proposal for a play to be whistled dead immediately when the helmet of the

ball-carrier comes off also will draw much debate by owners. If passed, the ball will be spotted at the “progress spot where the helmet comes off,” said the other competition committee co-chairman, Jeff Fisher, coach of the Tennessee Titans.

Barring unforeseen opposition, the positioning of the umpire will be moved from in the area of the linebackers to behind the offensive backfield. No vote is needed on this change, which is being made because McKay said the competition committee had at least 100 instances of umpires being knocked to the ground last season.

“They’re kind of back there trying to survive,” McKay said of the umpires’ previous positioning.

Goodell shed little light

on the labor situation. It’s been several weeks since the league and the players union have held negotiations, but he blamed logistics. The NFLPA held its annual meetings in Maui earlier this month, and now the league is doing the same in Orlando.

“In the next week or so, the two sides will talk and I guess will be setting up some negotiating sessions,” he said. “It’s early; we’re in the first quarter here.”

The collective bargaining agreement expires next March and a work stoppage is possible without a new deal.

Goodell emphasized the league’s intention to pursue all avenues in the StarCaps case now before a Minnesota judge. Vikings defensive tackles Pat Williams and Kevin Williams so far have successfully fought suspension under the NFL’s anti-drug policy, arguing the NFL has unevenly enforced the policy and didn’t properly inform players about the weight-loss supplement containing a banned substance.

Judge Gary Larson is accepting documents in the case after testifying recently concluded.

“This is very important to make sure we have a credible (anti-drug) program,” Goodell said. “And we can’t have that if we have different states and different players having different standards. It’s not just true for us but for all sports.” □

Read ARUBA TODAY every day



Nicole Hoevertsz

In order to assume more executive positions, according to IOC board member

Nicole Hoevertsz recognizes the influence of women

ORANJESTAD — Leadership in the world of sports is based on the same fundamentals as in any organization or even country, and women have to take the initiative to assume more executive powers.

This is what Nicole Hoevertsz, member of the International Olympic Committee and Secretary of the Aruba Council of Ministers said yesterday, during the working breakfast for female participants to the midyear meeting of the Inter American Press Association, here in Aruba.

Hoevertsz addressed the theme of 'Women and Sports,' focusing on the need for women to assume more leadership positions. She gave a brief history of women's participation in the

Olympic Games, which was nonexistent in the antiquities. In fact, Greeks ordered athletes to compete in nude, in order to avoid women from disguising themselves in order to participate in the Games.

When Baron Pierre de Coubertin reached a consensus to start a renewed, global Olympic movement at the end of the 19th century, he excluded women from the Games, except as spectators. Yet, women participated in the second Olympic Games in the modern era. And as years went by, female athletes have been able to carve their place on the sports fields of the Games, peaking in number and events during the Beijing Games.

Continued on Page B3

Fundraiser To Cover Travel For Top Swimmers Representing Aruba Barracudas Synchronized Simmers Organize Fun Bingo at Marriott

PALM BEACH – On Sunday March 28th a fun bingo event will be organized from 2-5 PM in the Grand Ballroom of the Aruba Marriott Resort (hotel). There are many cash prizes to be won ranging from 75 to 750 florins, along with some door prizes.

All proceeds for this bingo will be used to cover the travel expenses of the Barracuda Synchronized Swimming Club of Aruba's top swimming performers, who will represent Aruba abroad.

The Barracuda girls that perform in the synchronized swimming selection train very hard, around some 15-20 hours per week to put in the best scores for Aruba. Upcoming performances include synchronized swimming contests in Medellin, Jamaica,

Cuba and Peru. The sports club does not have sufficient funds and therefore organizes this bingo at Marriott as a fundraiser. Everybody is welcome to join and great prizes can be won!

The Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club was founded in 1975 and houses multiple top performing teams in synchronized swimming, consisting of girls (only) ranging in age from 6 to 18. With the Barracudas being the only synchronized swimming club in Aruba, they are well known throughout the Caribbean as one of the strongest performers in the region!

If you would like to be part of this winning team and become a synchronized swimmer at the Barracudas Swimming Club



In the pictures: The selection team of the Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club of Aruba during their performance at a 2009 swimming contest in Peru.

you are most welcome to join. You must be in the possession of swimming diploma C, and if you like music, swimming, stretching and exercise, this might be just the sport for you! For more information, please contact president of the Barracudas Synchronized Swimming Club Michelle Pablo, tel 592 9551. □

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Two Arubans honoured for contributions to St. Maarten



PHILIPSBURG--Aruba Day celebrations culminated with the honouring of two Arubans for their contributions to St. Maarten over the years, during a ceremony at Emilio Wilson

Park on Sunday afternoon. Honoured were Victor Elias Curlingford and Mary Bryson. Both were showered with praise for their contributions and presented

with plaques and tokens of appreciation by Leader of Government Commissioner William Marlin on behalf of Chuchubi Foundation. Aruba-born Bryson is a Registered Nurse (RN) who

has worked extensively in health care in St. Maarten. She first worked at Cupecoy Hotel as the Personnel Manager and Nurse from 1980 to 1990, after which she went to St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to help set up the transfer from St. Rose Hospital. At SMMC she was Assistant Finance Manager and had a host of responsibilities. She retired in 2004 and since then has been working with seniors, shut-ins and less fortunate children in the community. Her goal is to see seniors, shut-ins and the less fortunate receive one hot meal per day. She also assists with the payment of school fees and takes the seniors on outings around the island and on cruises abroad with volunteers. Curlingford was born in St. Maarten, but was taken to

Aruba when he was nine months old. He stayed there for 31 years. He has been extensively involved in Carnival in both Aruba and St. Maarten. He believes that Carnival is an expression of art, but says this cultural event in St. Maarten is influenced by other countries. He would like to see the island's youths become more involved in costume-designing. The youth can be encouraged by organising competitions and by encouraging the Carnival troupe leaders to engage their services instead of bringing in foreign designers, he said. Marlin praised both honourees for their contributions. He said Aruba and St. Maarten had close ties and bonds, and commended the Arubans on their involvement. □

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day with the Discover Scuba Dive Course, get PADI certified or join us on our daily one and two tank dives. Red Sail Sports is Aruba's lead-ing dive and watersports operator. Activity desks are located at the Hyatt Regency, Marriott Resorts and on Renaissance Island.

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Nicole Hoevertsz recognizes the influence of women

Continued from Page B1

By 2012, it is expected that there will be equal numbers of female and male athletes. Moreover, women will be participating in all Olympic events, including boxing during the London Games. While women progressed as athletes, they are still lagging in executive positions. The IOC had its first female member only 30 years ago. By the end of 2000, the IOC adopted a percentage resolution that determined that every national committee, every international and national sports federation, and also the IOC itself have to have at least 20 percent of the boards consisting of women. The objective of that measure was to help the committees and federations push for programs that open up possibilities for women to occupy all positions on sport level, not only as athletes, but also as referees, judges, coaches. In other words, women have to become leaders in the sport world as well. "This thought is based on the principle of equality of men and women. But it is not easy to achieve that goal," Hoevertsz stated, who added that even though the 20 percent quota was meant well, it is still a limitation, based on the fact that women form half of the world's population.

Even though female participation in the Olympic Games has increased significantly, press coverage by women is still at a very low level, only 21 percent. This has a major effect in the coverage of events by female athletes. The 'coloring' is very male and Nicole Hoevertsz, a former Olympian herself in the synchronized swimming discipline, illustrated this with a Dutch article. The article did not pay attention to the athletic abilities of the swimmers but focused on their looks. A Dominican Republic newspaper article did choose to high light the posterior of a top Mexican athlete, instead

of her achievements. "We need more female reporters to cover the Games, to get a different perspective," Hoevertsz commented. The IOC grants financial aid for people all over the world to assume more leadership roles and more and more women are making use of these possibilities, the Aruban IOC member explained. Yet, for women to truly take over executive positions, they have to make a run for it themselves. Men are not always the ones to blame for the lack of presence of female executives. Too many women decide to forgo opportunities, for many reasons. Raising a family is certainly a valid one. However, this can be changed if the work culture is also changed.

The working hours, schedules and other factors are still geared toward a men's world, according to Nicole

Hoevertsz. This limits the possibility for promotion of a female employee, who also has to juggle a family. "However, women need to change their attitude, and recognize their own talents and abilities," the IOC member continued. "It is not a matter of trying to be better than men, but to be at the same level as them."

Like in the Olympics, women can compete at all levels, in a variety of functions." Even though Nicole Hoevertsz acknowledged the percentage quota for women has contributed to more female presence in leadership positions in the sport world, it still requires for women to have the same capabilities as men, otherwise there will be resentment. This resentment could mean that the female participation in the decision process will remain at the minimum. This means that

men and women have to work together, to use their own particular characteristics to complement each other and therefore, come up with a more balanced decision overall. "Women have to translate their talents into an effective organization. And in order to do so, women have to identify their own leadership qualities and act accordingly. Ms. Hoevertsz was introduced by Ms. Cristina Aby-Azar, Managing Director of the Wall



Street Journal Americas and member of the IAPA board, who expressed her admiration for the Aruban executives who has an impressive international trajectory, particularly in the world of sports. The attendance for Nicole Hoevertsz' presentation was on the low side. Only some 13 media representatives were present at the breakfast session. Yet the exchange that followed was lively and quite inspiring. □

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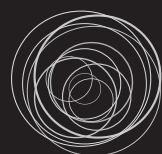


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FISHERMAN'S HUTS - With peaks of 37 knots of windgusts, windsurf- and kitesurf races were held last weekend at the Fishermen Huts during the Sail Event organised by the Aruba Sailing Association (ASA). On Saturday the public got treated a spectacular kite competition. Spectators at

the beach enjoyed sensational jumps and tricks. In the afternoon Aruba's famous windsurfers Sarah-Quita en Quincy Offringa, Taty Frans from Bonaire and Belgium heroe Steven van Broeckhoven performed their world class moves.

Sunday afternoon the young

windsurfers of the Wind Racers Club Aruba (WRCA) showed their talents. Devided in the three categories Pro Kids, Super Kids and New Kids 5 slalom races were held. Surprisingly Sarah-Quita, Quincy, Taty, Steven and the famous Aruban windsurfer Ryan Lampe showed up at



the start line. Taty Frans came in first, followed by Ryan Lampe.

Especially the younger and lighter windsurfers were having trouble to jibe around the last buoy, far out at sea. During the award ceremony, were ASA handed out beautiful medals, WRCA-president Rob Grijpma complimented the kids for their perseverance. "Nobody gave up. All participants finished all 5 races. You can be proud of yourselves," he said.

Results:

Pro Kids

1. Ethan Westera
2. Berend Pronk
3. Rens Grijpma / Nik vd Eerenbeemt

Super Kids

1. Mack vd Eerenbeemt
2. Mathias Verploeg
3. Milan de Jonge

New Kids

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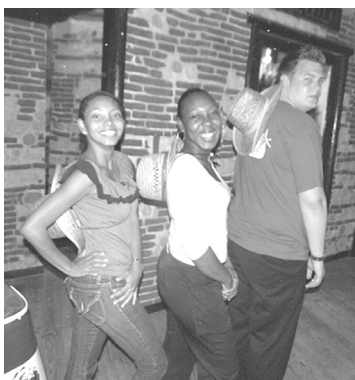
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HUMAN HINTS

Releasing Old Patterns

We get into life situations that throw us off balance and make us unstable. Our daily energy is drained in the search for solid ground.

We can use these times to examine and change whatever is throwing our lives out of balance. When we avoid a situation, the energy smolders, the pressure builds until finally we are forced to deal with it. It may smolder for years or lifetimes, but it will not go away until we deal with it and release the energy.

This is not to say that dealing with it must be difficult. Releasing old patterns can be easy or hard, depending on our approach. When we approach any situation with the energy of understanding and cooperation, Grace will help resolve the situation smoothly. When we approach any situation with the energy of combat, winning, getting our way, we will have a fight on our hands, and it will be as difficult as we make it. When approaching any situation or negotiation, we

must be ready for our ego to be attacked, which will make us want to lash out in anger and frustration. When ego wants to strike, we must resist the urge. Understanding and cooperation will always get you more than fighting and resisting. You will always benefit from maintaining the energy of ease and grace in any interaction.

Releasing deep-rooted patterns does not have to be painful when you approach them with the proper energy. Understand that your patterns exist because they once protected you. In the past, they were necessary for your survival. Now is the time for them to dissipate into another expression. Your old survival mechanisms are no longer necessary, and they hold you back from further growth and expansion.

It is your job to recognize the patterns, thank them for a job well done, and release the energy from your body, into a new expression. In your meditations, imagine yourself approaching the sensation of the old pattern you want to release. As you get closer, you recognize that the sensation is a

physical entity. Imagine love, understanding, compassion, beaming out of your heart, directly into the heart of the beast in front of you, your old pattern. Watch, as your light energy fills its body. In a moment of grand completion, the being relaxes, smiles, and gracefully disintegrates before you, leaving behind a glow of peace.

These energy exercises will affect your entire being, and your life. Not instantly, but in time, the old patterns will break up and release their hold on your body. When you meditate on this, your old patterns of limitation will disappear without you even knowing they are gone. You will simply never think about that part of yourself again, for it will no longer exist.

Think of your old patterns as conscious beings, just like people. All conscious beings instinctively understand the natural cycle of life and death, so the completion of an expression is a joyous event, even though fighting for our lives is our most primal instinct. When we imagine infusing our emotional baggage with the lubricant of understanding,


compassion, love and cooperation, the patterns can no longer hold on to our bodies, so they must slide away gracefully and effortlessly.

Until Tomorrow...


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~Quentin Danziger
Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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Magician Adam Steinfeld laughs it up, on stage, at the Magic Live!® theater, showroom. ASTONISHING! EXCITING! MYSTIFYING! FUN! ...enjoy a hilarious evening of Magic, fun for entire family.

PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live!

theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



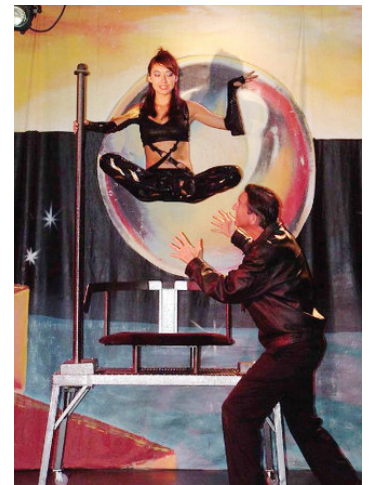
and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer

Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach,

Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX OFFICE tickets are located in main lobby. Purchase TICKETS AT THE DOOR.

SEE MAGIC, comedy and "seemingly impossible feats, get ready to marvel at the all new, MAGIC! theater-of-illusions show starring ADAM STEINFELD. MAGIC LIVE! theater-of-illusions show...at the WESTIN-Aruba, 9pm nightly, starring AdamSteinfeld. □



IF YOU GO

What: Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions show
Where: Westin - Aruba, Palm beach (high-rise area)
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld
ShowTime: 9:00 pm, nightly, (7 days a week) theater opens at 8:30pm
Tickets: at the door, MagicLive box office (hotel lobby), or Westin-aruba concierges desk
Box office opens at 7:30pm nightly
Price: \$19.95 under 15, \$29.95 adults

Spectacular seafood special at Driftwood

From the pier to your plate at authentic Aruban seafood restaurant

ORANJESTAD - It's happening downtown. Established Driftwood Restaurant launches a serie of spectacular and delicious seafood specials, available now.

Driftwood is specialized in fresh seafood from the Caribbean Sea and has become the favorite spot for Aruban-style seafood dishes. Fresh fish is caught daily by the owner himself and



perfectly and authentically prepared by their talented local Chef.

Located in the heart of characteristic downtown, Driftwood offers you a unique dining experience. Enjoy the freshest fish, biggest shrimp, or the most succulent Caribbean lobster amid the rustic ambience of the natural driftwood dining room.

The authentic local seafood restaurant.

The menu includes a large variety of typically Aruban delicacies including a three star fish soup and a mouth-watering filet of fish served with a mild Aruban Creole sauce... a seafood lover's dream come true.

Opening hours: every day, but Tuesdays from 5pm till 10:30pm.



Special of the month

Every month the Chef treats his customers with a delicious dinner special. In June one may choose from different soups, fish cakes or salads to start with. The main

course is a choice of catch of the day (prepared your way), Jumbo Shrimp or for the meatlovers Filet Mignon or Chicken Breast. The evening is topped with a grand dessert and coffee or tea.

Driftwood Restaurant

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Email: info@driftwoodaruba.com

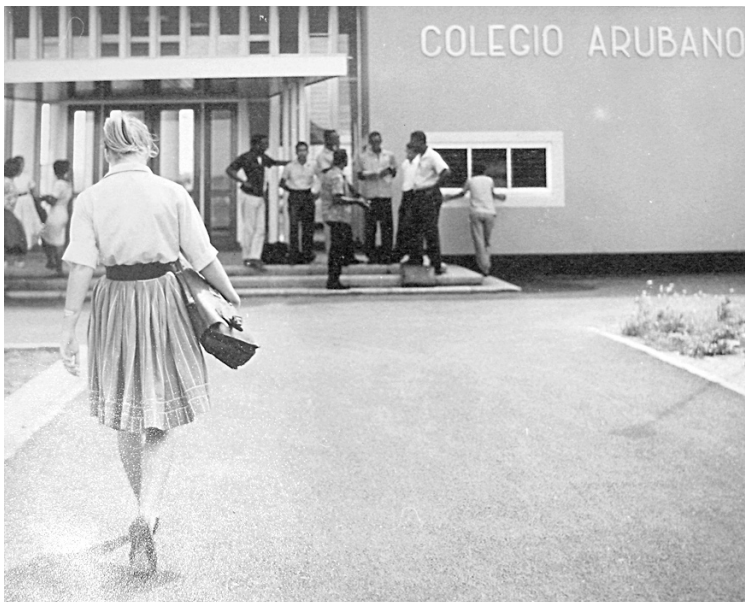
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Colegio Arubano's 50th anniversary party brings generations together



MOOMBA BEACH - Colegio Arubano, the island's only HAVO/VWO High School, is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Many generations have enjoyed, or maybe detested, the years they have spent at this school in the Vondellaan. The school has a terrific track record when one considers the successful careers of its alumnae. Most of the island's top professionals, among them ministers, lawyers, doctors and teachers, have spent their early years at this school.

Fifty reasons for a great party, thought Menno Conijn, manager of MooMba Beach, and he organized an informal get-together, which will take place on Saturday, March 27. A come-as-u-are happening with white as



the dress code, so everyone will recognize each other as former students, teachers or drop-outs. The music will of course be from years past: the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties will be relived through songs that hold a thousand memories.

Invitations to the Get Together at MooMba have been extended via Facebook, Twitter, the internet and via word of mouth, with lots of very enthusiastic reactions. MooMba's DJ has already been flooded with requests

for hit songs from decades past. He will be playing the best of the best, as requested by the ex-Colegio students. Hopefully many generations of ex-students will come to MooMba to see each other again, to say hello or just to have fun with friends. Everyone is welcome, so non-CA students as well. There is no entry fee, just show up and enjoy.

The get-together at MooMba Beach starts at 9 pm. Wear white if you are an ex Colegio student. □



Rescued mother-dog & pup looking for home



One week ago we found Destiny and Destiny's Child abandoned. We took them off the street and nursed them back to better health. They are very sweet and beautiful. We are now looking for a loving home for both. Adoptive parents may call: 593 9398 □

Aqua Grill... "the hip restaurant that is heaven on earth for seafood lovers," Fodor's Travel Guide



Among the island's many fine restaurants, Aqua Grill is the premier seafood sensation. Excitingly prepared in an open-view kitchen, fresh local catches join delicacies from waters abroad, including live Maine lobster, Norwegian salmon, sashimi tuna, and Alaskan king crab, along with a selection of non-seafood dishes.

Aqua Grill's award-winning chef offers a menu of classic and contemporary dishes. The fresh

seafood is prepared in a variety of regional styles, melding local island charm with the traditions of New England, the spices of Jamaica, the zesty flavors of Italy, the mystique of Indonesia, and beyond.

In addition to a selection of authentic dishes, your seafood can also be prepared wood-grilled, broiled, poached, steamed, or pan-fried upon request. Complimenting the menu is the island's

largest raw bar and a generous wine list of over one hundred selections.

Set in a contemporary decor combining the traditions of a New England fish house with the ease and character of the Caribbean, Aqua Grill's warm, island hospitality is the final ingredient to the complete dining experience on Aruba.

Open nightly from 6pm to 11pm, 5:00pm to 11:00pm on Sunday. □

The Coconut Trading Co., is Stocked with Gorgeous Gifts



Palm Beach -- The Coconut Trading Company displays gifts personally selected by owner Jodi Tobman, a Boston native and longtime Aruba resident, and you are invited to discover extraordinary

treasures handcrafted by skilled artisans and colorfully displayed in a beach house ambiance in the lobby of the Marriott Ocean Club, and at a second just-opened location at the Village Mall on Palm

Beach.

Every corner of the store attracts the eye with a dazzling assortment of gifts and home accents that command attention; strikingly designed photo frames, candle holders and snuffers, serving pieces to dress every picnic table up and dazzling glass accents: a virtual potpourri of tropical and distinctive gifts to grace any home.

The stores also stock a fine selection of creative sterling jewelry, handcrafted with precious gems, sea glass, turquoise and fresh water pearls, which can be found



artfully arranged, beckoning to be worn. Find extraordinary gifts for all your family members and friends, there's something for everyone on your list, not to forget yourself!

Popular with repeat visitors and locals, The Coconut Trading Co. has become the premier stop for the perfect gift, with great prices and convenient nighttime shopping hours. Shipping is available,

for larger pieces, offered with a drop ship program at a nominal fee.

The Coconut Trading Co., located in the Marriott Ocean Club lobby. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sundays until 7 p.m. The Coconut Trading Company, located at the Village Mall on Palm Beach. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Email: orders@salamanderholdings.com □



The healthiest foods on earth



1. Berries

All berries are low in sugar and high in fiber. Blueberries have been shown to increase memory in lab studies, and raspberries and strawberries are loaded with ellagic acid, a powerful antioxidant that seems to have some anti-cancer properties, according to the American Cancer Society.

2. Beans

Beans are extremely high in fiber, which helps to control weight, prevent or manage diabetes and blood sugar, and may help prevent colon cancer and protect against heart disease. The National Institute of Medicine recommends 25-38 grams of fiber a day. The average American gets only 4-11 grams. One cup of beans provides 11-17 grams.

3. Nuts



Some of the largest and most important long-term studies of diet and health have shown that eating nuts several times a week is consistent with a risk of heart attack and heart disease that is 30%-50% lower than the general population. Just one ounce of nuts—almonds, macadamia, Brazil, walnuts, pecans—eaten three to five times a week seems to be the magic number.

4. Wild Salmon

Fish is the ultimate anti-aging food. Cold-water fatty fish like wild salmon, sardines, mackerel and herring contain omega-3 fats that protect the brain and the heart, improve mood, and lower blood pressure and triglycerides.

5. Raw Milk

Raw, organic milk nearly always comes from grass-



fed cows and contains high levels of cancer-fighting CLA (conjugated linolenic acid) as well as a rich assortment of vitamins, minerals and beneficial bacteria (like Lactobacillus acidophilus)

6. Grass-Fed

Meat Meat from grass-fed cows has a much different fat profile than ordinary supermarket meat: high in omega-3s, lower in potentially harmful omega-6s and loaded with CLA, a kind of fat known for its anti-cancer activity. A superb source of protein and vitamin B12, it's also missing the antibiotics, steroids and hormones found in the meat that comes from feedlot farms.

7. Eggs

Considered by many to be nature's most perfect food, the egg is high in protein and relatively low in calories. The yolk contains choline, one of the most important nutrients



for the brain, as well as lutein and zeaxanthin, two critical nutrients for eye health. Brassica Vegetables Cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli and kale all contain plant compounds called indoles that help reduce the risk of cancer. In addition to a stunning range of vitamins and minerals, they also contain sulforaphane, an important plant chemical that helps the body detoxify health-damaging chemicals.

8. Apples

Not only do they keep the doctor away, they also appear to do the same for lung cancer, diabetes and asthma. An apple contains five grams of fiber and a rich blend of nutrients including the bone-building vitamin K and the anti-inflammatory nutrient quercetin. And there's no better way to control your appetite than an apple eaten about half an hour before a big meal.

9. Onions and Garlic

In an impressive number of published studies, the consumption of onions and garlic has demonstrated

protective effects against stomach, prostate and esophageal cancer. Along with broccoli, tea and apples, onions and garlic are among a select group of foods found to reduce mortality from heart disease by 20%.

10. Pomegranate Juice

Called "a natural Viagra" by researchers at Tel Aviv University, pomegranate juice is loaded with antioxidants. Studies show it can reduce blood pressure and plaque in the arteries. New research indicates it also slows the progression of tumors. Four to eight ounces a day is highly recommended.

11. Green Tea

Though all teas are great for you, green tea has a unique profile of plant chemicals that have anti-cancer activity. It's now fairly established that green tea may help prevent the following types of cancers in humans: bladder, colon, esophagus, pancreas, rectum and stomach. If that's not enough, it also appears to help with weight control.



'Press Law' still on table for St. Maarten, Curaçao



ARUBA--Antillean Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage has announced that the controversial Antillean media regulatory law is still very much on the table for St. Maarten and Curaçao. The draft law seeks to bring more responsible and objective reporting to the Antillean media, according to Government.

She made this announcement during the mid-year meeting of the Inter American Press Association (IAPA) in Aruba on Saturday. The meeting put media freedom in the Americas under the microscope.

"Our government believes that it is very important to maintain a high standard for the media. And we believe that it is important to regulate it through a media law," the prime minister said. After consultations and debates with all interested parties, the Antillean Government now has a draft in its final stages that it hopes will be approved by the Parliament in the "very near future."

Due to pending constitutional change, the Parliaments of Curaçao and St. Maarten will have to pass the media law. The BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, as Dutch public entities, will have a media law similar to that of the Netherlands.

The prime minister told the some 250 publishers and editors from around the Americas, "It is unquestionable that in some cases, the media have to walk a tightrope. And here is where the role of Government kicks in. As you may know, there is no absolute freedom. There are always limitations to be observed.

"The freedom of expression that is the birthright of a free press has its boundaries. It is the responsibility and the obligation of the government to guard these boundaries.

"Please do not misunderstand me. I am not advocating censorship, neither in advance or afterwards. In essence, what I am saying is that Government must protect the right of its citizens to privacy and, at the same time, guarantee the freedom of expression of the media.

"The question then is not whether freedom and responsibility can be united, but how they can be united and reconciled to the benefit of all," said De Jongh-Elhage, who takes up a second term as Prime Minister on Friday.

Government can accomplish these seemingly opposing objectives with a media policy with clear principles, objectives, norms and standards – in other words, a code of ethics, she pointed out. Mechanisms of dialogue between Government, civil society and the media must be established, and sanctions for violations of the media code of ethics must be articulated and made public.

The media are extremely important stakeholders in a community. They have a role to play in demanding accountability and transparency from the leadership of the communities she said.

"At the same time, we have a right to demand ethical, professional and objective media. When speaking of ethics, we automatically touch on the subject of the right to privacy," she said.

Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights establishes the right to respect "one's private and family life, his home and correspondence." The prime minister said there had been instances where reporting on traffic accidents, with all the horrific details and graphic pictures of the victims, had gone against our sense of respectability.

"And what to think of homicide cases where the suspect has been 'tried and sentenced' by the media even before he has been in court? It is obvious that when these cases occur, the media must try to attain a balance between freedom of expression and respect for the privacy of the individuals concerned," she continued.

De Jongh-Elhage said that, as a politician, she had learnt through experience that the higher you were on the political ladder, the more you had to learn to absorb, if you wanted to remain in politics. "The following Dutch proverb states it perfectly: Hoge bomen vangen veel wind ... Tall trees catch more wind."

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands had stated in her 2006 Christmas message, which the prime minister quoted: "The right to insult does not exist. There are general limitations that the laws prescribe, but there are also norms of values and civilisation. These are the foundations of a community that respects itself and its citizens. And that is why the right to insult does not exist."

The media in Curaçao comprise 32 radio stations, four TV stations, 11 daily newspapers and a weekly Spanish newspaper that cover a population of 150,000. Bonaire has 10 radio stations, one TV station and one daily newspaper for a population of 13,000. St. Maarten also has 10 radio stations, one TV station and two newspapers for a population of 40,000.

St. Eustatius has one radio station for its population of 3,000. Saba also has one radio station for its 1,600 inhabitants. The Daily Herald, with extensive coverage on these two islands, serves as their daily newspaper. □

Editorial

Self-regulation

Prime Minister Emily de Jongh-Elhage referred to a draft law to regulate the Antillean media, during the mid-year meeting of the Inter American Press Association (IAPA) in Aruba. What the 250 foreign publishers and editors gathered for the occasion thought of her speech was not immediately clear, but it's no secret that journalists on the islands have expressed on various occasions reservations and serious concerns about several aspects of the plans of the Central Government in this regard. One positive aspect is that, according to the prime minister, the new Antillean Parliament to take office on Friday no longer will handle the law proposal, but will leave it to the future Parliaments of Country Curaçao and Country St. Maarten in light of the constitutional changes and dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles. This gives each island (future country) the opportunity to evaluate the matter carefully before any decision is taken.

While De Jongh-Elhage emphasised that she did not advocate censorship, any role for government when it comes to regulating the media is a highly sensitive matter at best and should trigger warning bells for every self-respecting journalist. While there obviously are privacy issues that irresponsible use of the media can create, victims in any case can always go to court as a last resort.

Rather than leaving it to politicians, self-regulation as accomplished in the Netherlands with the "Council of Journalism," for example, is to be preferred above sanctions involving government. That requires a better internal organisation and association of the local press to establish and enforce its own Code of Ethics, among other things, but prevents even the most remote possibility or impression that government might somehow be able to influence the media or apply any kind of preferential treatment.

That the De Jongh-Elhage Cabinet, more specifically current Education Minister Omayra Leeflang, wants to do something about the excesses that exist in certain media in Curaçao is understandable, but that does not automatically mean the press freedom that has always characterised the Netherlands Antilles must somehow be restricted. Especially in a small society such as that of St. Maarten, great care must be taken to safeguard the independence of the media, while at the same time a serious effort should be made for more self-regulation in the long-term interest of the profession and its essential credibility. □

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1BR	WK 11	ROOM 303	P.O.	\$ 12.000	
2BR	WK 9/10	ROOM 211	P.O.	\$ 18.000 PW	
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STU	WK 12	ROOM 119	P.O.	\$ 6.000	
2BR	WK 11	ROOM 46 / 49	P.V.	\$ 17.000	
1BR	WK 10	ROOM 27	P.V.	\$ 8.000	

For more info: 731-2012
E-mail: johnypaesch@yahoo.com

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ORANJESTAD

SAN NICOLAAS
Dr. Cheung

Botica na warda

Oranjestad:
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San Nicolaas:

Police

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Noord 587-0009
Sta. Cruz 585-4710
Savaneta 584-7000
San Nicolas 584-5000

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Brandweer 115
Brandweer II 582-1108
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Warda Polis 582-4000
BGD Oranjestad 582-8877

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Argentina y Perú zanján roce histórico en encuentro en Lima

LIMA (Reuters) - Argentina y Perú dieron por zanjado el lunes un histórico roce con la visita oficial a Lima de la presidenta Cristina Fernández, quien dijo que era a modo de “desagravio” luego que Buenos Aires vendiera armas a Ecuador durante un conflicto militar con Perú en 1995.

En la primera visita oficial en 16 años de un presidente argentino a Perú, Fernández también recibió el apoyo de su homólogo Alan García en la disputa de Buenos Aires con el Reino Unido por la soberanía de las islas Malvinas.

“Siento que esta visita en los 16 años es una visita de desagravio institucional y de reparación histórica. Esto es lo que he venido a hacer en nombre de todos los argentinos”, dijo Fernández en una ceremonia en el Palacio de Gobierno, aunque sin hacer una referencia explícita a la venta de armamento.

Durante la breve guerra del Cenepa de 1995 -en la que Ecuador y Perú disputaron un territorio fronterizo-, el Gobierno del entonces



La presidenta de Argentina, Cristina Fernández, sonríe junto a su colega peruano, Alan García, durante una reunión bilateral sostenida ayer en Lima. Argentina y Perú dieron por zanjado el lunes un histórico roce con la visita oficial a Lima de la presidenta Cristina Fernández, quien dijo que era a modo de ‘desagravio’ luego que Buenos Aires vendiera armas a Ecuador durante un conflicto militar con Perú en 1995. REUTERS/Mariana Bazo

presidente argentino Carlos Menem proveyó armas a Quito pese a que oficiaba como mediador en el conflicto.

El presidente García, por su parte, dio por zanjado el roce. “Después de un largo tiempo

de distancia nos llena de satisfacción y afecto recibir a la presidenta argentina y poner punto final a un enojoso incidente que jamás debió ocurrir”, afirmó García.

Además, reiteró el apoyo

de su país a Argentina en la disputa por las islas Malvinas. “Cuando llegó el momento de respaldar a Argentina en su justísima reivindicación soberana de las Malvinas, que nosotros continuamos apoyando, pusimos al servicio

de la Argentina todo lo que podíamos poner”, agregó.

Argentina, que ha reclamado las islas del Atlántico Sur desde que Gran Bretaña estableció su Gobierno en el siglo XIX, las invadió en 1982.

Tras una guerra de dos meses, Argentina fue obligada a retirarse, pero aún reclama el archipiélago y dice que las recientemente iniciadas labores de exploración petrolera de la británica Desire Petroleum en la zona violan su soberanía.

El Gobierno de Fernández objetó formalmente la perforación y dijo que exigiría que todas las embarcaciones desde las Malvinas obtengan un permiso para atracar en Argentina. Los líderes latinoamericanos del “Grupo de Río”, que se reunió el mes pasado en México, emitieron un comunicado apoyando las demandas de Argentina de frenar las perforaciones alrededor de las Malvinas, y Fernández ha dicho que las naciones latinoamericanas respaldan a su país en la disputa. □

Decomisan toneladas de marihuana y cocaína en Colombia

BOGOTA (AP) - En dos acciones diferentes, miembros de la marina y de la policía secreta decomisaron 1,5 toneladas de cocaína, dos toneladas de marihuana y desarticularon una red de traficantes de armas desde Centroamérica a Colombia, se informó el lunes oficialmente.

El comandante de la Fuerza Naval del Caribe, contralmirante Henry Blain Garzón, reportó en una rueda de prensa que la marina de guerra en Cartagena, puerto turístico en el Caribe, decomiso en tres allanamientos 1,5 toneladas de cocaína y dos toneladas de marihuana que estaban listas para ser enviadas a los Estados Unidos y Europa.

El oficial dijo que las organizaciones delincuenciales además de enviar alijos de droga al exterior también estaban dedicadas al “microtráfico” o la distribución al detalle en centros urbanos, como un método de sostenimiento ilegal de la banda. Tres personas fueron capturadas. Blain declaró que en lo que va de 2009 la Armada Nacional ha incautado

en la zona cerca de cinco toneladas de cocaína y tres de marihuana.

En otro operativo, apoyado por la armada, el Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (DAS) o policía secreta, en un comunicado de prensa, dijo que había desarticulado una banda dedicada al tráfico de armas desde Centroamérica hacia Colombia.

Según el DAS, las labores de inteligencia y seguimiento se realizaron durante dos años a fin de recabar suficiente material probatorio que permitiera dismantelar la red de traficantes, integrada por tres hombres y una mujer que fueron capturados en Cartagena y la Isla de San Andrés, también ubicada en el Caribe.

Los investigadores lograron determinar que el material bélico se negociaba en varios países de Centroamérica, el cual era transportado a San Andrés y de allí llevado al continente donde era negociado con armados ilegales. Entre los diversos elementos, explicó el DAS, se encontraban lanzacohetes, fusiles y ametralladoras. □

En Santo Domingo

Corto circuito reduce operaciones en el aeropuerto

SANTO DOMINGO (AP) - Un cortocircuito dejó sin energía por más de 24 horas a una parte del aeropuerto de Santo Domingo que continua operando con ayuda de plantas externas, indicaron el lunes las autoridades de la terminal.

El Aeropuerto Internacional Las Américas “no ha cesado sus operaciones”, aseguró a la AP Yolanda Mañán, vocera de la compañía Aerodom, que maneja la terminal.

Mañán confirmó que al mediodía del domingo, cuando ocurrió el cortocircuito, la terminal sur dejó de funcionar, por lo que sus operaciones fueron trasladadas por unas horas a la terminal norte. La falla eléctrica provocó retrasos en las operaciones de la terminal, que con 70 vuelos diarios es la más importante de República Dominicana. Entre los retrasos, que crearon el domingo multitudinarias filas de pasajeros en el área de registro del aeropuerto, se encuentran varios vuelos de American Airlines a la costa este de Estados Unidos y a Puerto Rico, así como de Iberia, Condor y Copa.

La falta de energía no afectó la iluminación de la pista de aterrizaje y el funcionamiento del radar, explicó la vocera de Aerodom. Mañán detalló que desde este lunes, la terminal sur y las aerolíneas que operan en ella trabajan con plantas externas de emergencia rentadas por el aeropuerto. □

BID-América Latina teme reducción de flujo de capitales

CANCUN, México (Reuters) - Las autoridades financieras de América Latina están cada vez más preocupadas por el riesgo de que los flujos de capitales a la región se reduzcan bruscamente, una vez que los países industrializados comiencen a subir sus tasas de interés tras la crisis financiera global.

México y Brasil, las dos mayores economías de la región, han advertido sobre una eventual turbulencia financiera en caso de ajustes a las políticas monetarias y fiscales de los países ricos.

Al inaugurar la asamblea anual del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID) en Cancún, el presidente



El presidente mexicano, Felipe Calderón, durante la asamblea anual del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo desarrollado en el balneario azteca de Cancún. REUTERS/Gerardo Garcia

Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID) en Cancún, el presidente

Transportista cumplen paro parcial en Caracas

CARACAS (AP) - Un grupo de choferes de transportes públicos realizó el lunes un paro de unas doce horas en la capital en rechazo a la creciente criminalidad, mientras el gobierno consideró la protesta como un “fracaso” debido a la escasa participación de conductores en la huelga.

El presidente de uno de los sindicatos de transportistas de la capital, Luis Trosel, dijo a la prensa que cerca del 80% de los conductores de transportes públicos del oeste de Caracas acató el llamado al paro que se inició la medianoche del domingo y que culminó al mediodía del lunes.

A pesar de que el sindicato de transportistas sostiene que hubo un acatamiento masivo de la protesta, en un recorrido que realizó la AP por varios puntos de la capital se observó afluencia normal de transportes de pasajeros.

“Esto no se trata de si fracasó o no el paro, es de que se den cuenta que los fines de semanas tenemos un parte de guerra y matan al menos a tres compañeros por mes”, señaló Trosel al desestimar las críticas que realizó el gobierno contra la protesta.

El ministro de Obras Públicas, Diosdado Cabello, afirmó el lunes que fue un “fracaso” el paro, y aseguró que el gobierno no necesitó activar el plan de contingencia que tenía preparado debido a que pocos conductores se sumaron a la protesta. Cabello admitió que hay una situación de inseguridad en el país, pero sostuvo que el Ministerio de Relaciones Interiores está atacando el problema en las mesas de trabajo que mantiene con los choferes de transportes públicos.

El índice de criminalidad en Venezuela se ha tornado cada vez más alarmante. De acuerdo con cifras oficiales en los primeros once meses del 2009 ocurrieron 12.257 homicidios, poniendo a Venezuela entre los países más violentos de América Latina. □

mexicano, Felipe Calderón, dijo el lunes que comparte los temores sobre la fortaleza de la recuperación económica global y sus consecuencias.

“Comparto que existen aún dudas sobre la solidez de la recuperación de la demanda privada a nivel mundial, que hay incertidumbre en torno a la velocidad con que las naciones desarrolladas y algunas economías emergentes ajustarán sus políticas monetarias y fiscales hacia una estrategia de salida”, afirmó Calderón.

La asamblea del BID congrega en el balneario mexicano de Cancún a las autoridades financieras

de América Latina y el Caribe, así como a grandes economías que aportan recursos, pero no son receptoras de crédito, como Estados Unidos y China. Mientras Estados Unidos ha mantenido su tasa de interés cercana a cero, los inversionistas han llevado sus capitales a naciones como Brasil y México y otros mercados emergentes en el pasado reciente en busca de mejores rendimientos, lo que ha dado impulso a los precios de los bonos y a sus monedas.

Pero con la recuperación económica global en marcha, las autoridades financieras están anticipando cambios en el esquema que podrían

afectar la dirección en la que fluyen los capitales, perjudicando a las naciones que se habían visto favorecidas.

MAS RESERVAS

Brasil y México están acumulando más reservas en dólares para contar con el margen de maniobra suficiente si es que pronto se materializan las alzas en las tasas de interés y el retiro de los estímulos en las naciones industrializadas.

“En el caso de Brasil, pensamos que es mejor cubrirnos (...) incluso si hay un costo asociado con ello”, dijo el jefe del Banco Central, Henrique Meirelles, el fin de semana. “Durante la crisis, la necesidad de reservas demostró ser mucho mayor de lo que la gente anticipaba”, agregó al margen de la reunión del BID en Cancún. Los países miembros del BID aprobaron el lunes elevar su capital en 70.000 millones de dólares para reabastecer sus arcas, después de que el organismo prestó un récord de 15.500 millones de dólares a sus socios el año pasado, en medio de una de las peores crisis económicas mundiales. □

Indígenas ecuatorianos protestan contra actividad petrolera

QUITO (AP) - Medio centenar de indígenas de la amazonia protestaron el lunes en esta capital en contra de la posibilidad de que se reanude la explotación de crudo en esa zona.

Los aborígenes sarayaku, ataviados con trajes típicos, plumas y pintura en la cara, se apostaron al frente del Ministerio de Recursos No Renovables para rechazar con pancartas una eventual reanudación de la explotación petrolera en las provincias de Pastaza y Morona Santiago, al sureste de la amazonia.

“Reafirmamos nuestra posición firme e

inquebrantable de rechazo a toda intromisión e injerencia de agentes externos que pretendan ilegalmente ingresar con fines extractivos a nuestro territorio ancestral”, dijo la comunidad sarayaku en un comunicado.

Añadió que quedan en “estado de máxima alerta” para evitar cualquier intento de explotación. Los sarayaku se opusieron por casi una década, incluso con actos violentos, al trabajo de las empresas petroleras, la argentina CGC, que negocia un acuerdo de terminación mutua de su contrato con el estado, y la estadounidense Burlington. □

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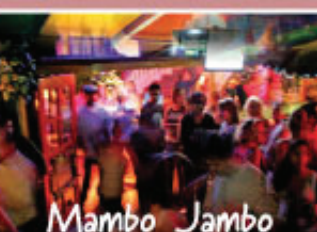
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